

## Pride of the Ancients

One of the constant themes running through my artwork is my connection to the tradition of animal image making which stretches back to the dawn of human history. Some of the attraction of southern Africa is the chance to see some of the images left on the rocks and cliff faces by a late stone age people, called the Khoi-San, between about 10,000 and 2,500 years ago. Anthropologists believe that the ancient rock and cave paintings were created by the Shaman, Sage or Spiritual Healer as an expression of dearly-held spiritual beliefs.

On a rain-season trip to Botswana's Okavango Delta, we encountered this magnificent male lion lying by the side of the track which we were driving. In fact, since our attention was focused on two hippos that were running through the water on the other side of the track, we nearly missed seeing him!

He was staring at us so frankly, as if to say, "Look at me. I'm perfect, majestic." He became the embodiment of male lion hood. I decided to draw him with images, mostly lions, from rock art and cave art on the wall behind him, thus this lion and I are both linked to those who came before us, two new verses in a long and ancient hymn.